HOSANA
TANAKA
NINJA
GIRLS
2

Ninja Girls

2

Hosana Tanaka

Translated and adapted by
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HONORIFICS EXPLAINED

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san" and is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/ Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

-[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute*, it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

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Ninja Girls

Hosana Tanaka

Ninja Girls
Volume 2

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The Rebellion so far:

The only surviving member of the Katana family, Raizō, set off on a journey with the Katana shinobi: Kagari, whose special technique is Shintaigo; Kisarabi, a clairvoyant sniper; and Himemaru, a rope-master and master of disguise. Raizō's life is thrown into chaos by these three beautiful yet dangerous shinobi.

The goal of the journey is to restore the Katana family. Their plan is for Raizō to marry into a noble family, and to then use their influence and power to strengthen the Katana name. Throughout their journey together, Raizō senses his bonds with the shinobi deepening.

Meanwhile, Seigan is planning his attacks. He wants to make Kagari's Shintaigo technique his own—by any means necessary. Their journey keeps becoming more and more chaotic!

SEIGAN USES HIS OWN BLOOD IN A TATTOO...

...ITS MAGICAL POWER TURNS ENEMIES INTO PUPPETS.

NOW, LET'S CON-TINUE...

FSHH

UGH...

BEAR WITH IT.

THE FEAR AND PAIN WILL SOON FADE.

WHERE WE LEFT OFF YESTER-DAY.

THE BLOOD RITE...

6

Betrayal Rebellion

I'M HUNGRY!

GROWL

I'M...

UGGHH...

FOOOOOOOD!

FLAIL

I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY-MORE!

I HAVEN'T HAD A PROPER MEAL IN THREE DAYS!

STOP IT, KAGARI!

WE CAN'T HELP IT IF WE'RE SHORT ON MONEY.

CHOMP CHOMP

ALL RIGHT...

NOTH-ING BUT GRASS FOR A WEEK...!?

I GUESS I'LL GIVE YOU SOME OF MY RATIONS.

I'M USED TO HUNGER.

SOME-TIMES I'D LIVE ON GRASS BOILED IN WATER FOR A WHOLE WEEK!

CHOMP CHOMP

YOU SHOULD LEARN FROM MASTER!

"TH-THAT'S IT"??

THAT'S IT?!

STOP BEING SELFISH!

SNIFF...

SNIFF...

SNIFF...

IF SHE WERE HERE, SHE'D PROB-ABLY...

LIKE WE COULD RELY ON HER.

AND MONEY.

I WISH MIZUCHI WAS HERE.

...DISAP-PEAR, BETRAY US, AND JOIN KABUKI.

WAAAAAHHH!

WHAT?

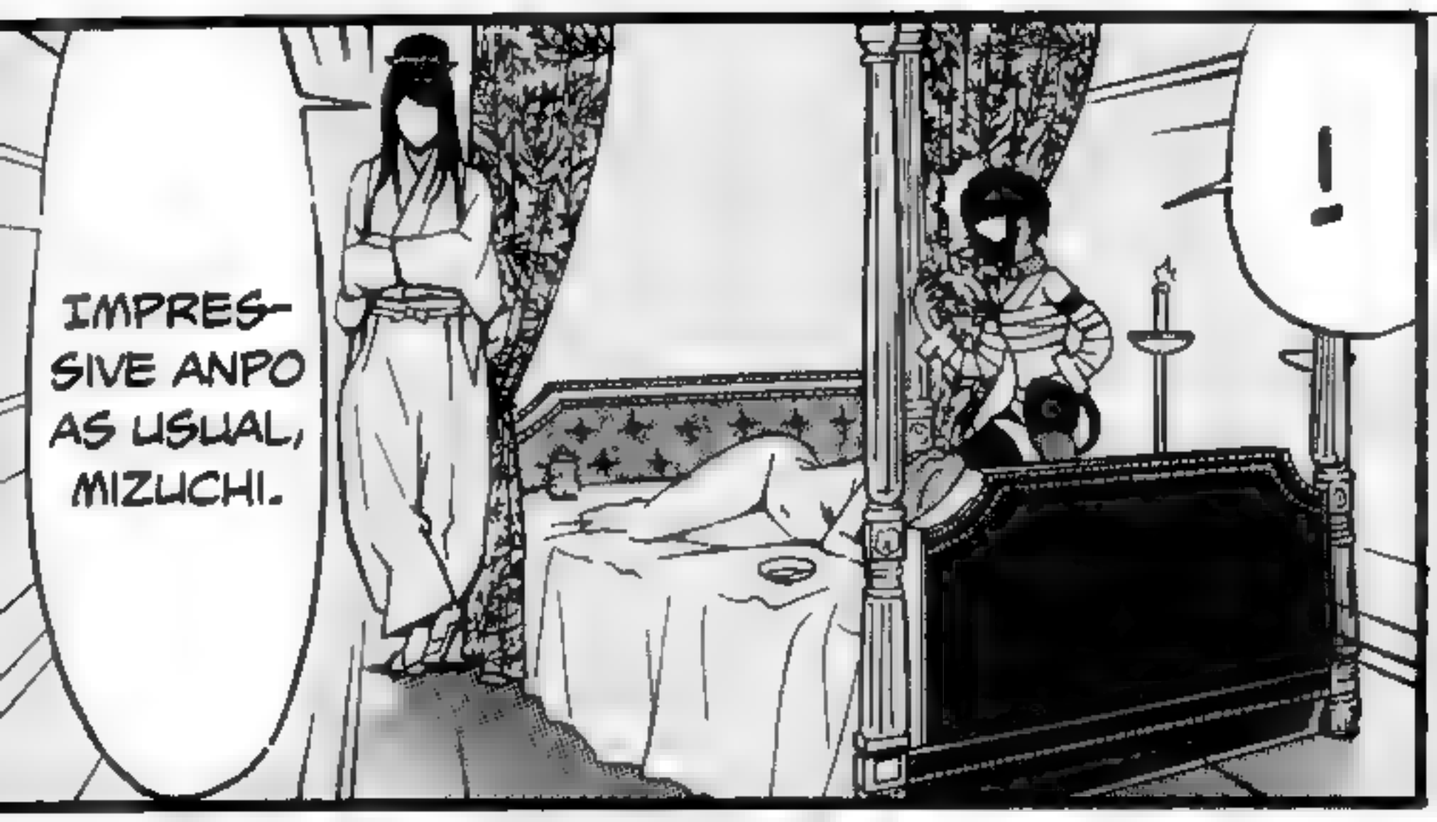
EVEN MIZUCHI WOULDN'T SELL US OUT FOR MONEY!

SHE'S CRYING?!

DRIP

DRIP

DRIP



ANPO = SILENT WALKING TECHNIQUE

MONEY.

YESTERDAY AND TODAY'S SHARE!!

I'VE COME FOR MY PAY-MENT!!

FSSHH

SLAP

WHIRR

YOU HAVEN'T WORKED ONCE SINCE YOU'VE COME HERE.

WE HAVE NO MONEY TO GIVE YOU.

WATCH YOUR MOUTH.

PULL

PULL

CRACK

PULL

KABUKI'S SHINOBI-NAJA

...ME WORK!

THEN LET...

WHSSH

NAJA, LET MIZUCHI DO "THAT JOB"...

THERE'S PLENTY OF WORK TO GO AROUND.

THAT'S ENOUGH, YOU TWO.

PULL PULL

MONEY!!

HERE'S TWO DAYS' WORTH.

I'M NOT SURPRISED IT WAS MONEY THAT MADE YOU TURN ON THEM.

NUZZLE

NUZZLE

YOU LOVE MONEY THAT MUCH?

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GO PSYCHO OVER ONE LATE PAYMENT.

!!

SMACK

SEIGAN-SAMA'S LOVE. ♡

I PREFER LOVE OVER MONEY.

ONE OF OUR PEOPLE IS KEEPING AN EYE ON THE KATANA FAMILY SURVIVOR.

NOOOO...

IF YOU WANT YOUR BELOVED MONEY, YOU HAVE TO WORK FOR IT.

NOW, MIZU-CHI-CHAN. ♡

TAKE CARE OF HER.

THERE'S A KUNOICHI WITH HIM NAMED "KAGARI."

ME...KILL HER? KAGARI-NEE?!

BUT IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING ABOUT KAGARI-DONO...

...SHE WON'T MAKE IT MUCH LONGER!

SIGH

I'M NOT SURPRISED.

WE DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY TO STAY THERE.

御宿所

GET LOST!!

-SAMA?!

IS ONE OF YOU NAMED KAGARI-SAMA?

CREAK

WAIT!

AND HERE IS YOUR FOOD!

YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD ME EARLIER!

HERE, STAY IN OUR BEST ROOM!

A VERY RICH PERSON NOTIFIED ALL THE INNS IN TOWN...

INNKEEPER?

.....

GULP

WOOOWW

DO YOU THINK THIS COULD BE...

HEY...

SNIFFLE

YEAH, RIGHT!

DADDY LONG-LEGS?! THE PURPLE ROSE MAN?!

...NOT TO BE RUDE TO SOMEONE CALLED "KAGARI-SAMA."

KYAA!

SLIDE

わわわ

TREMBLE

GROWL

THUD

...A TRAP?!

MASTER! LET'S EAT!

TWITCH

KAGARI-NEE!
♡

MIZUCHI!
♡

MI...

THUD

THANKS!
♡
I'M FEELING MUCH BETTER NOW.

HERE'S SOME MORE, KAGARI-NEE!
♡

WHERE'VE YOU BEEN AND WHAT'VE YOU BEEN DOING?

SO, MIZUCHI...

I ONLY GOT ONE LITTLE SAR-DINE... OH WELL...

KLINK

SAVING UP THIS MONEY.

WHERE'D YOU GET IT?

.....

SHE MUST BE THE LAST ONE...

I...

YOU KNOW HER, HUH?

OH...

SQUEEZE

I CAN'T!

ANY-THING BUT THAT!

SEIGAN-SAMA'S INTERESTED IN HER TECHNIQUE.

HE WANTS HER TO JOIN OUR RANKS.

OH, WHEN I SAID "TAKE CARE OF HER" I ONLY MEANT KIDNAP HER.

I'LL DO IT!!

I CAN BE WITH KAGARI-NEE AGAIN!

SAR-DINES ARE A TREAT FOR ME...

IT'S FINE.

YOU'RE ALL BACK TOGETHER AGAIN, SO LET'S JUST ALL GET ALONG...

THAT'S NOT AN ANSWER...

DISTRACTED

TRADE SECRET.

PFFTTT

MIZUCHI! HOW DARE YOU ONLY GIVE MASTER ONE SARDINE?!

IF YOU'RE GOING TO TRAVEL WITH US, YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE!

THEY'VE BEEN DECEIVED BY SOMEONE WHO HAS NO ABILITIES OR TALENT WHATSOEVER!

KATANA FAMILY REVIVAL? NO!

DEATH!!

NOT IMPRESSED.

.....

NOT AGAIN, MASTER...

I NEED TO GET KAGARI-NEE AWAY FROM HIM RIGHT AWAY!

IT'S OKAY. I'LL GET A STOM-ACHACHE IF I EAT ANY MORE...

I'M SO SORRY, I DIDN'T NOTICE!

I REALLY CAN'T LET THIS GO NOW...

SNEAK

ZZZ

ZZZ

御宿所

MIZUCHI?!

SHH!

NEE...

KAGARI-
NEE...

YOU'RE SO SPOILED!

IF YOU WANT TO SLEEP TOGETHER, JUST SAY SO!

♡

THAT'S NOT...

I HAVE SOME-THING TO TELL YOU, NEE.

NEE, THAT'S NOT IT!

AH!

PLEASE COME AWAY WITH ME RIGHT NOW!

.....

SO HAPPY...

I CAN'T TELL YOU WHERE...

...BUT PLEASE TRUST ME AND COME WITH ME!

I WON'T DO ANYTHING BAD TO YOU.

NO!

ARE YOU SCARED TO GO TO THE BATHROOM BY YOURSELF?

DO YOU MEAN...LEAVE MASTER AND THE OTHERS TO GO WITH YOU?

YES, THAT'S RIGHT.

I KNOW THERE ARE CIRCUMSTANCES...

...AND THAT YOU'RE LOYAL TO THE MASTER...

...BUT...

I CAN'T.

THAT'S NOT ALL.

ISN'T HE RUGGED BECAUSE HE'S FROM A FAMILY OF FARMERS?

AND HE ISN'T GENTLE, HE'S WEAK!

NEE, THAT'S A LITTLE...

SO UNTIL WE GET THINGS SETTLED FOR HIM...

RIGHT NOW WE'RE GOING BY KISARABI'S PLAN AND FINDING HIM A BRIDE.

AT LEAST UNTIL THEN...

...I WANT TO STAY BY HIS SIDE...

THE REASON I'M SERVING HIM...

...IS BECAUSE I WAS TOUCHED BY HIS GENTLE HEART AND RUGGED PERSONALITY.

IN ORDER FOR HER TO DO SHINTAIGO, SHE NEEDS TO BE IN LOVE...

SEIGAN-SAMA'S INTERESTED IN HER TECHNIQUE.

NEE'S TECHNIQUE... "SHINTAIGO"!

WHY DIDN'T I REALIZE?!

...NEE'S LIPS?!

MIZUCHI?

RUMBLE

THAT MAN...

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM!

御宿

ZZZ

ZZZ

MIZUCHI-DONO?

UM...

FSSSSHHHH

EEEEE!

SWAY

SWAY

WHAT TH...?

SWAY

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU'RE GOING TO DIE HERE, MASTER.

NAMU.

SU...

SUI-CIDE?!

YOU GOT TIRED OF THE WORLD AND THREW YOURSELF OFF A CLIFF.

EVERYONE KNOWS MY SPECIALTY IS ASSASSINA-TION.

SO IF I KILL YOU WITH MY USUAL TECHNIQUE, THEY'LL KNOW IT WAS ME.

THAT'S YOUR PLAN? (I GUESS IT'S KIND OF OBVIOUS NOW...)

66

NAMU = BUDDHIST EQUIVALENT OF "AMEN"

NOW...

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO KILL ME?!

YES.

Please don't search for me.
Raizō

RIGHT NOW THEY'RE PROBABLY READING YOUR NOTE THAT I LEFT.

YOUR SILENCE IS ANSWER ENOUGH.

SILENCE

WAS THE MONEY A RE-WARD FOR THAT?

DID YOU BETRAY US AND JOIN KABUKI?!

WHEN THEY DOUBTED YOU...

...KAGARI-DONO DEFENDED YOU.

"WE BOTH SHARE THAT BOND!!"

"MIZUCHI WOULDN'T SELL US OUT FOR MONEY!"

SO THE PEOPLE SHE LOVES WON'T CRY...

MAYBE SHE'S REALLY A NICE GIRL.

I CAN'T STAND THAT.

.....

MONEY IS IMPOR-TANT.

WITHOUT MONEY, THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE WILL CRY.

FOOD...

TWITCH

DOES THAT RING A BELL AT ALL?!

FWOOSH

FALL!

AHHH!

WELL, ONLY A LITTLE...

WHOOSH

YOU MADE KAGARI-NEE CRY, DIDN'T YOU?!

THEN YOU DESERVE TO DIE!

HUH?

WIRE?!

A STRING?

WHOOSH

WHIRR

SNAP

DAMN IT!

?!

BOING

SHUU

STAY RIGHT THERE, MIZUCHI.

.....

SPLASH

SPLASH

SPLASH

TMP

JUST RETURN MASTER. IF YOU DON'T...

I WON'T ASK ANY QUES-TIONS.

CLICK

THEY'RE...

YOU FAILED.

EVEN IF I SLEEP APART FROM MASTER, I STILL KEEP AN EYE ON HIM.
♡

THEY'RE GONNA KILL EACH OTHER!

I CAN'T...

TRY IT.

TWITCH

STOP!

KAGARI-NEE...

NO, KAGARI-NEE!

I WOULD NEVER BETRAY YOU!

I WAS GOING TO BE AS GENTLE WITH YOU AS I COULD!

SHE'S MAD...

MIZUCHI, WHAT YOU DID TO MASTER IS UNFORGIV-ABLE.

TWITCH

SO I MUST PUNISH YOU.

TREMBLE

WHAT'S GONNA HAP-PEN?

TREMBLE

!!

TREMBLE

THERE!!

SMACK

DID YOU THINK I'D BE HAPPY WITH ANY MONEY YOU GOT FOR SACRIFICING MASTER?

YOU FOOL...

!

I JUST WANTED TO HAVE KAGARI-NEE *AND* MONEY!!

WAAAAH

WAAAAAHHH! BUT BUT BUT!

SHE RAN AWAY...

AH!

WAAH

IS HE THAT IMPORTANT TO YOU?

WHAT'S IT SAY?

"GO TO THE OUMI PROV-INCE."

AFTER YES-TERDAY, NOW THIS...

THERE'S A SECRET MESSAGE IN THE NIGAI-GASA?

NIGAIGASA- SECRET METHOD OF SHINOBI COMMUNICATION

IN ORDER TO GET KAGARI-NEE...

...I HAVE TO FIND THAT GUY A BRIDE SO I CAN TAKE HIM AWAY FROM NEE!

CHANGE OF PLANS!!

...I WON'T LET HIM HAVE HER...

NEE BELONGS TO MIZUCHI...

THAT WAY, I WON'T BE DISOBEYING KABUKI.

A TRAP...

SEEMS OBVIOUS

NO...

CRUMPLE

"SHE'S THE PERFECT CANDIDATE FOR A BRIDE."

"THE PROVINCE'S POLITICAL INSTABILITY LEADS TO MANY OPENINGS...

...ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THE FEUDAL LORD'S ONLY DAUGHTER, HIBARI-HIME, IS THE ONLY HEIR TO THE KABURAGI FAMILY."

LET'S TRY IT OUT.

SO THAT MEANS SHE'S ON OUR SIDE, TOO.

MIZUCHI-DONO IS ON KAGARI-DONO'S SIDE.

WELL, LET'S GO, THEN!

TO SEE HIBARI-HIME OF OUMI PROVINCE!

Betrayal Rebellion / End

MY LORD! ♡

I'M MORE SCARED OF IGNOR-ING HER KIND-NESS...

YOU REALIZE THAT'S THE PUR-POSE OF THIS TRIP, RIGHT?

AHH! ♡ THE PART ABOUT A PRIN-CESS CON-VINCED YOU, HUH? ♡

Bonus *Ninja Girls* Manga

AND RICH AND FAMOUS WOMEN WILL BE ALL OVER HIM!

MASTER WILL BE SO POPULAR!

SAMURAI FROM ALL OVER WILL COME SEARCHING FOR HIM!

OOOH, THE AUGUST ISSUE OF *MAIDEN'S MANUAL*!

OH, THIS IS...

HUH?!

WHAT ARE YOU READING, KAGARI?

...WHAT ABOUT US?

BUT IF THAT HAPPENS...

SPECIAL REPORT!!

HOTTEST MILITARY MEN OF SENGOKU ERA!!

NOOO!!

ARE YOU CHEATING ON MASTER?

I THOUGHT YOU WERE READING SOMETHING SERIOUS!

HA HA!

...FIRE US?!

?

I'M HOME!

WOULD HE...

ODA NOBUNAGA DEBUTS AT NUMBER 2!

WHO?

HIS POPULARITY SOARED AFTER HIS VICTORY AT OKEHAZAMA!

NUMBER 1 IS TAKEDA-DONO, HUH?

HUH ??!

YOU'RE FINE THE WAY YOU ARE!!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BECOME POPULAR, MY LORD!!

NOOOOOO!!

FAMILY REVIVAL CRISIS

STOP CRYING! WE'LL MAKE SURE HE IS SOMEDAY!

IF HE IS, OUR RANKS WILL GO UP, TOO! ♡

DEPRESSED

I JUST THOUGHT MAYBE... MASTER WOULD BE IN IT...

7 Provincial Rebellion

THE PRINCESS HAS ARRIVED!

HUH? ALREADY?

NOW, AS WE PRACTICED!

YEESSSS.

YOU NEED TO LOOK LIKE A MAR-RIAGE CANDI-DATE!

THE KATANA FAMILY REVIVAL IS NEAR!

PREPARE YOUR-SELF!

AHH... WAIT, WAIT!

UM...I DON'T THINK...

...I'M READY...

A MOUNTAIN FORTRESS AT THE BORDER OF YAMATO, SAGARA...

WHOOOSH

THE TIME: THE SENGOKU ERA!

OHH, IT'S THE PRIN-CESS!

PRIN-CESS...?

...SEARCH FOR SOME KIND OF RELIEF.

!

THE VILLAGERS, IMPOVERISHED BY SUCCESSIVE WARS...

WAAAAAA-I-I-T!!

LET US...

NOW, PRIN-CESS.

KA-
KLINK

I SEE THE DAUGHTER OF KABURAGI KYOTAKA, HIBARI-HIME!

WE'RE A BAND OF SOLDIERS CALLED "SHIZAN KETSUGA"!!!

SHIZAN KETSUGA- MOUNTAINS OF CORPSES, RIVERS OF BLOOD

HAND OVER THE PRIN-CESS!

Shizan Ketsuga

FLAP

WHAA...

TMP TMP TMP TMP

...WHAT?!

WE WON'T LET YOU LAY A FINGER ON THE PRINCESS!

SWISH

SWISH

SLASH

KNOW YOUR PLACES, WORMS!

EYAAAHH!

WH- WHAT'S GOING ON?

RUFFIANS!

THOOM

AH!

TRIP

GLANCE

SHINTAIGO!!!

THEN MASTER'S APPEARANCE WILL BE EVEN MORE DRAMATIC!

LISTEN, KAGARI. BE AS FLAMBOYANT WITH YOUR ATTACK AS YOU CAN.

THIS IS DANGER-OUS!

WE NEED TO GET THE PRIN-CESS OUT OF HERE!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

THE GUARDS ARE...

AHHH

THIS IS IT: "OPERATION PRINCE ON A WHITE HORSE"!

WAAHH

わあああ

TMP

TMP

TMP

TMP

HEY, WAIT!

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

I'VE COME TO SAVE THE PRINCESS!

I AM KATANA RAIZŌ, THE ORPHAN SON OF THE LORD OF TSUKIGASE!

HE'S PRETTY GOOD.

HOW MANLY. ♡

GOOD JOB, MY LORD!

I SHALL PROTECT YOU, PRINCESS!

A SOLDIER...

NOW WHAT?

GRAB

SLASH

HERE I COME!

TAKE THAT!

YANKED BACK BY WIRES

PHEW

I'VE DEFEATED THE RUFFIANS, PRINCESS!

PLEASE RAISE YOUR HEAD.

TH-THUMP

TH-THUMP

WHAT A COURA-GEOUS MAN...

TH-THUMP TH-THUMP

BY YOURSELF, WHEN ALL THE GUARDS WERE BEATEN?!

...BRAVE HERO. ♡

THAT'S A PRINCESS?!!

I, HIBARI, THANK YOU...

CAN WE TAKE OFF THE MASKS NOW?

MISSION ACCOM-PLISHED!

GAAH!

FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN ONE UP CLOSE...

...I HAD NO IDEA THEY WERE SO BEAUTI-FUL!

N-N-N-N-NOT AT ALL...

SAGARA-KABURAGI CASTLE

YOU SAVED THE PRINCESS' LIFE!

THE BANDITS RAN AWAY BEFORE I COULD CATCH THEM...

LOOKS LIKE HE'S FALLING FOR IT...

IT WAS NOTHING, REALLY!

I, IWAMI GONZA, THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF MY LORD.

OH NO, I COULDN'T!

IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT PLEASE ACCEPT THIS...

MY LORD IS GETTING ON IN YEARS AND ONLY HAS ONE DAUGHTER...

...IF ANYTHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO HER, WE WOULD BE DESTROYED.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE PEOPLE OF OUR PROVINCE ARE EXHAUSTED.

SO FAR EVERYTHING'S GONE ACCORDING TO KISARABI'S PLAN...

NOW!!!

NOW IT'S ALL UP TO ME...

IF POSSIBLE, I'D LIKE TO SERVE THIS FAMILY—EVEN THE LOWEST POSITION IS FINE!

TRUTHFULLY, I'M LITTLE MORE THAN A VAGRANT...

TH-THUMP

TH-THUMP

HUH?!

OUTSIDERS NEED A REC-OMMENDA-TION FROM SOMEONE INSIDE THE FAMILY.

THERE IS ALREADY SOMEONE WHO WILL VOUCH FOR HIM!

THAT WON'T BE NECES-SARY, IWAMI-DONO!

THE PRINCESS!

SILENCE

I'M SORRY!

OUR SOLDIERS WERE INJURED BADLY BY THE BANDITS...

...AND WON'T BE ABLE TO FIGHT FOR A WHILE.

WE'RE AT WAR AND MOST OF MY GUARDS HAVE LEFT FOR BATTLE.

SO I'D LIKE TO ASK RAIZŌ-DONO TO BE MY BODYGUARD.

I SAID NO, BUT PRIN-CESS IS...

...SO POPULAR... IT'S TRUE THAT ANY-THING MIGHT HAPPEN.

...THAT LOOK ON HER FACE...

THIS IS BETTER THAN I HOPED, BUT...

THE PRINCESS' BODY-GUARD...? UNBELIEV-ABLE!

DO YOU NOT WANT TO?

NO, I'LL DO IT!

.....

I'VE DONE SOME-THING UNFORGIV-ABLE!!

SHE TRULY THINKS I SAVED HER LIFE...

...I FEEL TERRIBLE DECEIV-ING A GIRL LIKE HER, EVEN IF IT IS FOR MY FAMILY!

SNAP

I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOME-THING, PRIN-CESS! ACTUALLY, I...

KRACK

THEN, PLEASE TAKE CARE OF ME.

MY BRAVE HERO. ♡

OUR LORD KATANA RAIZŌ IS YOUNG BUT HAS MUCH MILITARY EXPERIENCE!

HE'LL RISK HIS LIFE FOR YOURS AND SURPASS YOUR EXPECTA-TIONS!

THUD

THANK YOU, PRINCESS!

AN IHAI?

WE'RE KATANA RAIZŌ'S PROTÉGÉES!

NICE TO MEET YOU!

NO ONE SUSPICIOUS!

WHO ARE YOU?

I SEE.

I WELCOME ALL OF YOU.

...I FELT SO GUILTY I COULDN'T TAKE IT...

WHEN I THOUGHT ABOUT DECEIVING A GIRL LIKE HER...

WHY DID YOU PANIC?

LUCKILY YOUR MOTHER STOPPED YOU IN TIME!

YOU WERE ABOUT TO RUIN OUR PLAN!

SO YOU NEED A BRIDE OF HIGH STANDING! THEN WE CAN USE HER INFLUENCE AND POWER!

OUR MISSION IS TO RESTORE YOUR FAMILY!

NOW, ALL OF A SUDDEN, YOU FEEL GUILTY?!

SILENCE

.....

I'LL DO IT, I PROMISE!

THAT'S WHY WE'RE DOING THIS!

PLEASE GET DRESSED AND IN ORDER!

IT'S ALREADY PAST THE HOUR OF THE TIGER!

IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP, RAIZŌ-DONO!

THE HOUR OF THE TIGER...?!

THE HOUR OF THE TIGER - AROUND 4 A.M.

SO?! THE PRINCESS HAS BEEN UP FOR SOME TIME ALREADY!

IT'S STILL DARK OUTSIDE!

PLEASE.

SHALL I READ YOUR SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY?

THEN WE SHALL TOUR THE PROV-INCE.

ALL THAT IN ONE DAY?

THE VILLAGE CROP-PLANTING FESTIVAL IS AT THE HOUR OF THE SERPENT.

...THE FLAG-RAISING CEREMONY IS AT THE HOUR OF THE DRAGON.

SOLDIERS WILL DEPART FROM THE OUTER CITADEL AT THE HOUR OF THE HARE...

.....

Y-YES, PRIN-CESS.

RAIZŌ.

WELL THEN, LET'S GO...

CHATTER

CHATTER

CHATTER

NOTE: HOUR OF THE HARE = AROUND 6 A.M.; HOUR OF THE SERPENT = AROUND 9 A.M.; HOUR OF THE DRAGON = AROUND 8 A.M.

FIGHT FOR OUR PROVINCE, FIGHT FOR OUR FAMILY!

HIBARI-SAMA!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

THE PRIN-CESS!

SHE'S COME TO SEE US OFF!

I'LL BE PRAYING FOR YOUR VICTORY AND SAFE RETURN.

GO NOW, WITH MARISHI-TEN'S PROTECTION!

YES, PRINCESS!

HI-BA-RI! HI-BA-RI!

YES, MILADY!

WHAT'S WITH THIS ATMOSPHERE?!

PRINCESS!

CROP-PLANT-ING FESTIVAL

DON'T TROU-BLE YOUR-SELF!

PLEASE DON'T, PRINCESS!

PLEASE! I WANT TO HELP!

WE'RE SO GRATE-FUL.

WE'LL HAVE ABUNDANT HARVESTS THIS YEAR, TOO!

TOURING THE PROVINCE

HIME-SAMA!

THANK YOU!!

CALM DOWN, EVERY-ONE!

HIBARI-SAMA!

PLEASE DON'T PUSH!

MATCH-ING HAPPI...

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN...

AND SHE'S TREATED LIKE A CELEBRITY EVERY-WHERE SHE GOES...

WHAT A ROUGH DAILY SCHEDULE...

HOUR OF THE DOG, RE-TURNING HOME.

HOUR OF THE DOG - AROUND 8 P.M.

IS THIS THE POWER OF A PRIN-CESS?

SHE'S NOT EVEN WINDED...

TREMBLE

!

NOT AT ALL...

...BUT YOU MUST BE, HIME...

ARE YOU TIRED, RAIZŌ?

I SEE...

EVER SINCE FATHER FELL ILL, IT'S BEEN LIKE THIS.

I'VE ACCEPTED MY FATE.

OH, I'M USED TO IT!

MY BRAVE HERO. ♡

WELL, I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW.

TWITCH

PHEW

ONE WEEK LATER

...MANY DIGNITARIES WILL BE THERE, SO PLEASE PREPARE YOURSELF!

TONIGHT THERE'S A NOH PERFORMANCE TO CELEBRATE OUR VICTORY...

SHE'S A DEMON!

AT THIS RATE I'LL EXPLODE BEFORE I GET CLOSE TO HIME!

THE GRUELING DAILY SCHEDULE REPEATS AGAIN...

YES, I KNOW.

I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU, RAIZŌ-DONO!

KLINK

KLINK

SIGH, SO BUSY!

NO, I CAN'T.

YOU SHOULD ASK THAT OGRE IF YOU CAN TAKE A BREAK TO REST...

KAGARI-DONO...

ARE YOU OKAY, MY LORD?

HIME IS WORKING SO HARD... I CAN'T JUST GIVE UP.

BUT...

I TOLD YOU, I CAN'T... THE PRINCESS IS...

I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOUR HEALTH!

NOBLES EAT THE BEST FOOD EVERY DAY, UNLIKE US!

THAT'S HOW THEY CAN HANDLE SUCH RIGOROUS SCHED-ULES!

IF YOU KEEP THIS PACE UP, YOUR BODY WILL-

GAAARRR

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE PRIN-CESS!

CONTROL YOUR-SELF!

WHAAAT ?!

TH-THANKS.

WE'LL GO PATROL THE HALL, MY LORD.

I WONDER IF SHE HEARD...

HIME...

HIME?

.....

YEAH, RIGHT...
THAT'S HOW THEY CAN HANDLE SUCH RIGOROUS SCHEDULES!

AND TODAY SHE HAS A FEVER.
HER HANDS WERE SHAKING BEFORE...

OH, I'M USED TO IT.

CRACKLE

THEY LIT THE FIRE IN THE BRAZIER...

IT'S TIME.

PLOP

UH-
OH...

WHERE'S HIBARI-HIME?!

CHATTER

CHATTER

HIME-SAMA IS MISS-ING!

THE DIGNI-TARIES ARE COMPLAIN-ING.

SO ARE THE CITIZENS!

WHERE'S THE PRINCESS? IT'S WAY PAST TIME...

SMELLS LIKE GUN-POWDER...?

WHERE IS THE PRIN-CESS?

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

NOW...

RAIZŌ-DONO...

I HAVE NO IDEA.

TELL ME THE TRUTH. WHERE IS SHE?

ERR...

SHE IS NOT! NO ONE HAS SEEN HER!

ALREADY OVER THERE.

SMACK

OR DO YOU...

...WANT TO KILL HIME?

WHAT?!

IT'LL BE EVEN MORE CRUCIAL IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO HER!

AS HER BODYGUARD, I CANNOT ALLOW IT!

SHE'S STILL INSIDE?! OUT OF THE WAY!

I'M WELL AWARE! BUT TODAY IS CRUCIAL FOR THE FAMILY!

HIME ISN'T FEELING WELL...

...TO KILL THE PRINCESS!

SOMEONE IS TRYING...

WHAT'S GOING ON?

WAS THAT THE NOH STAGE?

WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN.

Provincial Rebellion / End

Ninja Girls

SOMEONE'S TARGETING...

...THE PRINCESS?!

RAIZÔ ?!

I'M SORRY, HIME!

!

THE DIGNITARIES ARE OVER THERE!

NOO!!

OH NO!!

KAGARI-DONO AND THE OTHERS WERE GUARD-ING THEM!!

KA...
KAGARI-
DONO!

SHIN...

HIME-
MARU-
DONO!

KISARABI-
SAN!

TAI...
GO...

FWOOOSH

KAGARI-
DONOO-
OOOO!!

8

Kemari Rebellion

AND SO ARE THE DIGNI-TARIES...

YOU'RE ALL SAFE?!

I SHOT OUT THE PILLARS OF THE STAGE WITH MY RIFLE...

I NOTICED THE SMELL OF GUN-POWDER JUST IN TIME...

...SO WE COULD SHELTER OUR-SELVES FROM THE BLAST WITH IT...

THEN HIME-MARU PULLED IT WITH ROPES...

HEY! I CAN ONLY USE SHINTAIGO WHEN MASTER IS LOOKING AT ME!

IYAAAAGHH!

AND SHE WAS SUPPOSED TO HOLD THE ROOF UP, BUT...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, PRINCESS?

OHH, PRINCESS!

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

IT'S DANGEROUS!

PRINCESS! WE NEED TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

SO SOMEONE IS TRYING TO KILL ME?

I SEE...

YES! THANK Y—

AND YOU, RAIZŌ!

IT'S FINE, RAIZŌ.

KISARABI-SAN...

WITHOUT A DOUBT!

BECAUSE OF YOU, THE CHIEF VASSALS WERE SAVED!

GOOD WORK, KUNOICHI!

YOU FOOL!

SILENCE!

WHATEVER REASON YOU HAVE, IT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO MAKE THE VASSALS WAIT!

OH, THAT'S BECAUSE...

WHY DIDN'T YOU WAKE ME WHEN IT WAS TIME TO GO?

WHAT DID YOU SAY, YOU IDIOT PRIN-CESS?!

I SHALL LET IT GO THIS TIME SINCE YOU SAVED MY LIFE...

BUT NEXT TIME I'LL NOT BE SO FOR-GIVING.

...PRIN-CESS...

YES...

YES, IDIOT!

I-IDIOT?!

A PRINCESS WHO DOESN'T CONSIDER...

...THE FEELINGS OF HER RETAINERS... IS AN IDIOT!

MY LORD WAS ONLY THINKING OF YOUR HEALTH!

PLEASE FORGIVE HER, PRINCESS...

CALM DOWN.

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

BUT DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU MAD...

...TO HAVE HER TALK TO YOU LIKE THAT?

KEEP IT DOWN, KAGARI-DONO!

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT IDIOT PRINCESS!

...HUH?

AS A PRINCESS, SHE PROBABLY HAD TO SAY THOSE THINGS.

HIBARI...

...NEVER SHOW WEAKNESS IN FRONT OF OTHERS.

I DON'T GET IT!

IT'S NOT THAT HARD TO UNDER-STAND...

SO YOU MUST ALWAYS ACT LIKE A PRINCESS...

...AND SMILE INNOCENTLY.

YOUR ANXIETY WILL AFFECT THE PEOPLE.

WHY NOT, FATHER?

THAT'S BEING A FAILURE AS A PRINCESS.

WHAT IS IT?

OH, THERE YOU ARE, PRIN-CESS.

OH...

SMILE

IT'S TIME.

LET'S GO ON TO THE NEXT BANQUET!

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

THIS IS CARELESS!!

SHE'S BOOKED UP THROUGH NEXT YEAR!

SMALL DELAYS TURN INTO BIG ONES AND COULD INVITE CATAS-TROPHE!

MISS-ING ONE DAY WILL THROW OFF EVERY-THING!

I KNOW THAT.

SOMEONE JUST TRIED TO BLOW HER UP HERE AND YOU WANT HER TO COME BACK?

LOOK AT THIS!

IS THIS REALLY OKAY?

NO OTHER WAY...

THERE'S NO OTHER WAY!

SMILE...

YOUR PEOPLE WILL RELAX AT THE SIGHT OF YOUR SMILE.

BE A PRINCESS LIKE THAT.

SMILE!

ROOOOAR

BUT...

CLATTER

AMAZING WILL-POWER...

LOOK! SHE'S DOING FINE!

HAHAHA

HIME! HIME-SAMA!

G-GOOD JOB, HIME!

FLAIL

HIME?!

ALL SHE THINKS ABOUT IS THE SCHEDULE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE HER!

LET'S GO TO THE NEXT EVENT, HIME! ♡

...IS TO USE FORCE!

MY ONLY CHOICE...

MM.

GOOD MORNING, PRIN-CESS.

CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP ...

THE NEXT MORN-ING.

I SENT HIM ON AN ERRAND. ♡

WHERE IS RAIZÔ-DONO?

NOW...

SSSSHHHH

ONE, TWO!

ONE, TWO!

SSSHHH

SSSHHH

.....

AND WHERE AM I?

WHERE IS EVERY-ONE?

WHAT ABOUT TODAY'S SCHED-ULE??

HEEEE-LLLP!!

RAIZÔ ?!

YOU'RE AWAKE, HIME!

THE DAY OFF?

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT...

IMPOS-SIBLE!

WHEN I THOUGHT OF HOW YOU MUST BE FEELING...

...I COULDN'T HELP BUT DO THIS!

BOW

YOU'RE EXHAUSTED FROM ALL YOUR DUTIES, PLUS THE EXPLOSION THE OTHER DAY...

I'M PREPARED FOR ANY PUNISH-MENT!

THIS WAS ALL MY IDEA!

THERE IS NONE...

YOU HAVE THE DAY OFF.

...YOU TOOK ME AWAY?

SO IN ORDER TO LET ME REST...

HE KNEW HE MIGHT BE PUNISHED BUT DID IT ANYWAY...

!

AFTER ALL I SAID TO YOU THE OTHER DAY!

TWITCH

A PRINCESS WHO DOESN'T CONSIDER THE FEELINGS OF HER RETAINERS IS AN IDIOT!

YOU WIN.

ALL RIGHT.

I BET EVERY-ONE'S PANICKING AT THE CASTLE, THOUGH!

HIME!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, HIME...

I'LL DO AS YOU WISH TODAY.

ALL WE NEED TO DO IS PUT ON A CONVINCING SHOW.

CHATTER

CHATTER

IT'S RISKY, BUT IF IT GOES WELL IT MIGHT MAKE MASTER AND THE PRINCESS CLOSER.

CHATTER

CHATTER

...ECSTASY!

I'M IN...

HIMEMARU

HEY.

HIME-SAMAAAA!!!

HEH HEH HEH

IF ONLY HIME NEVER CAME BACK...

HEY. DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY.

EVEN THOUGH I'M JUST A STAND-IN, THIS IS AMAZING! ♡

I BECAME A KUNOICHI JUST FOR THIS MOMENT, TO BECOME A PRINCESS!

BUT EXERCISE IS THE BEST FOR RELAXING YOUR MIND.

YEAH! SLEEPING ONLY RESTS YOUR BODY!

KEMARI?

I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH OUTDOOR GAMES...

I PLAYED IT WHEN I WAS LITTLE.

HOW DO YOU KNOW SUCH AN ELEGANT SPORT?

MY MOTHER USED TO MAKE ME TRAIN USING A BALL HANGING FROM THE EAVES.

SOUNDS LIKE A GREAT MEMORY! ♡

TEACH ME, RAIZŌ...

WHY DON'T YOU START?

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

O-OF COURSE!

I'LL TEACH YOU EVERY-THING!!

SO CUTE! ♡

RUMBLE

RUMBLE
RUMBLE

...AND KICK WITH YOUR RIGHT FOOT!

THAT'S IT! RELAX YOUR UPPER BODY...

DON'T RAISE YOUR LEG UP TOO HIGH, NOW...

LISTEN, KAGARI! THIS IS THE PERFECT CHANCE TO BRING THOSE TWO TOGETHER!

SO DON'T INTER-FERE!

YOU'RE A FAST LEARNER!

THAT'S RIGHT! THIS IS ALL FOR MASTER'S SAKE!

I CAN'T BE SAD...

TAKE IT ANYMORE!

I CAN'T

OH NO!

FOOM

YAAY!

SURE, NO PROB-LEM.

MY LORD!!

PLEASE TEACH ME KEMARI, TOO!!

THE MORE PEOPLE THE BETTER.

AFTER YOU LEARN THE BASICS, LET'S ALL PLAY TOGETHER!

ONE, TWO...

O- OKAY...

TH- THUMP

TH- THUMP...

YOU START, HIME!

NOW...

SHOOOOOOM

OOF!

THMP

YAARRR!

GLINT

SNAP

CRACK

BOOM BOOM

THUD

I WON!! ♡

SHE SCORES!

...BUT MY KUNOICHI BODY WON'T LOSE TO A LITTLE PRINCESS! ♡

OHOHOHO!

DID HE SEE? I MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT ELEGANT GAMES...

GRARR

WHAAT?!

YOU DID NOT "WIN"!! ♡

CRACK

KEMARI ISN'T A COMPE-TITION!

THAT'S NOT IN THE RULES!

BUT DOESN'T THE ONE WHO MISSES THE BALL LOSE?

...SO EVERY-ONE CAN KEEP IT IN THE AIR!

IT'S A PEACEFUL, REFINED GAME!

AHAHAHA

YOU KICK THE BALL TO OTHERS GENTLY...

HUH?

I'M FINE, RAIZŌ.

I DON'T MIND.

DEVASTATED

ARE YOU OKAY, HIME?

SPPIIIIIN

!!

GLINT

SHOOOOMP

THE PERSON WHO DROPS THE BALL...

...WILL NOW BE THE LOSER.

FIZZZ

H-HIME...

PLEASE DON'T MAKE IT SO HARD FOR OTHERS TO RETURN IT...

CRACKLE

BRING IT ON!

SNAP

FINE!

EVEN IF YOU'RE A PRINCESS, I WON'T HOLD BACK!

UH-OH....

CRACKLE

I HAD NO IDEA HIME WAS SUCH A SORE LOSER!

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING...

SHOOOOM

TAKE THAT!!

OOOF!

THIS ISN'T KEMARI!

AHHH

ALL WRONG!

IT'S WRONG...!

YAAA!!

MY LORD!!

WHAT'S WRONG, RAIZŌ?

THUD

OH WELL...

THUD

OOF!

HERE!

CAW

CAW

CAW

THEY SEEM LIKE THEY'RE HAVING FUN...

I'M EX-HAUSTED...

CAN'T MOVE...

I THOUGHT YOU'D BE A WEAK-LING...

YOU TOO, PRIN-CESS...

YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD, KUNOICHI.

THEY'RE FRIENDS?!

TOTALLY!

HA HA HA

LET'S CALL OFF THE MATCH FOR TODAY!!

THANKS FOR TODAY.

RAIZŌ.

HIME...!

FOR LETTING ME TAKE THE DAY OFF.

I WON'T FORGET IT.

OKAY!

BUT NO MORE SECRETS, OKAY?

HOWEVER...

...BEFORE THEY FIND OUT?

SHALL WE GO...

WHERE'S THE REAL PRIN-CESS??

I CAUGHT THIS ONE PEEING WHILE STANDING UP!

IT WAS TOO LATE.

KATANA RAIZŌ WAS A FIEND AFTER ALL!

HOW DARE YOU IMPER-SONATE THE PRIN-CESS!!

Kemari Rebellion / End

HOW DARE HE SEND A DOUBLE TO IMPERSON-ATE THE PRINCESS??

THAT KATANA RAIZŌ!

THE DOUBLE

HURRY UP, HIME-MARU!

THIS KNOT IS COM-PLICATED... STRUGGLE TOO MUCH AND IT'LL BREAK YOUR BONES!

WE MUST FIND HIM AND TEAR HIM TO PIECES!

CHATTER

BUT FIRST...

SILENCE!!!

AND MAKE EXAMPLES OF THEM!

...WE'LL MAKE A SEA OF BLOOD OUT OF THESE TWO!

9

Exposure Rebellion

STAND DOWN. NOW!

CHATTER

THEY FOUND OUT AFTER ALL...

AND...

YOU'RE SAFE...

HIBARI-SAMA?!

I SAID, STAND DOWN!!

PUNISH HIM!

THAT FIEND, KATANA RAIZŌ!

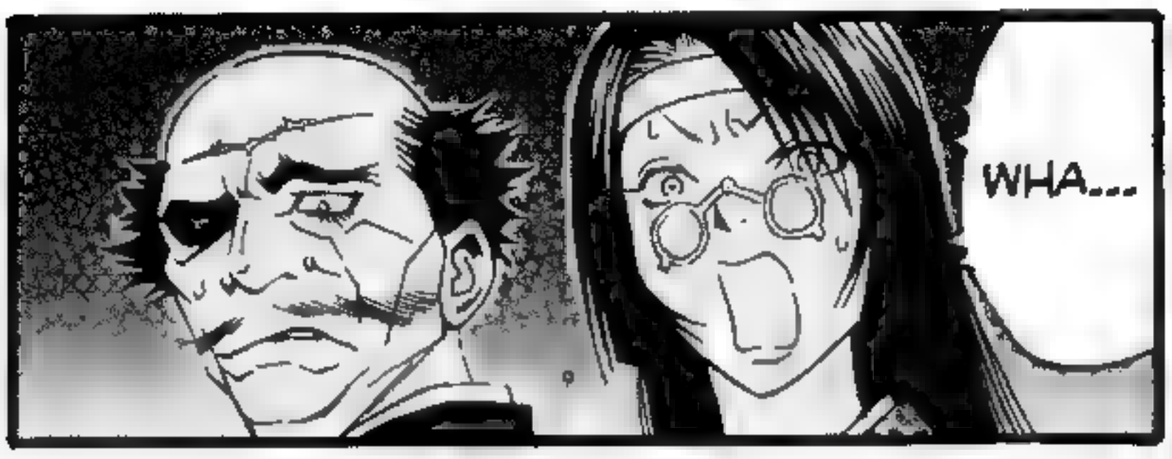
AHHH!

RAIZŌ HAS DONE NOTHING WRONG!

WH-WHAT THE?

H-HIMEEE?!

TRIP



I WANTED TO FORGET ABOUT MY DUTIES FOR ONE DAY, AND REST.

EVER SINCE THE EXPLOSION, I CAN'T SLEEP...

...YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT.

BUT REALLY...

JŪBÉ...

I'M ASHAMED OF MYSELF.

HIME IS COVERING FOR ME...

BUT IT INVITED SUCH CHAOS...

HOW CAN WE SAY ANYTHING BACK TO THAT?

YEAH! WATCH WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT MY LORD!

A "DATE" IS STRETCH-ING THINGS...

WATCH YOUR TONGUE, ROOKIE!

NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU WANTED TO GO ON A SECRET DATE WITH RAIZŌ-DONO...

WHAA?

SHE DIDN'T DENY IT...

HUH?

HIME'S BECOM-ING A DELIN-QUENT...!

ARE YOU THERE?

RAIZŌ!

YOU CALLED, HIME?

OH, THERE YOU ARE! ♡

WHAAAT?!

...WANT TO EAT WITH ME?

IF YOU HAVEN'T HAD LUNCH...

THAT'S RIGHT!

HE'S NOT WORTHY!

BUT I'M A LOWLY RETAINER...

I'M HAPPY TO EAT WITH HER, BUT POISON-TASTER?!

RIGHT...

YOU CAN'T SAY NO TO THAT, RIGHT?

YOU CAN BE THE ONE TO TASTE MY FOOD FOR POISON! ♡

WELL THEN, RAIZŌ!

LET'S EAT...

SNAP

FSSHH

OPEN WIDE. ♡

T-TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!

THIS IS A POISON-TASTER'S JOB? (IT'S NOT)

COME ON, RAIZŌ. ♡

OH!

CHOMP

BUT IF I DON'T EAT, IT'LL BE RUDE...

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

I'M REALLY NOT WORTHY...

PERSUASION BY SILENCE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

.....

HUH?!

HIME!

IT'S DE-LICIOUS!

NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THIS ONE.

RAIZÔ...

HIME! THAT IS UNLADY-LIKE!!

TOSS TOSS TOSS

I WON'T EAT WHAT I DON'T LIKE!

BUT... ONIONS ARE...

HE'S NOT TASTING FOR POISON! YOU'RE JUST BEING A PICKY EATER AGAIN!

ERR...

BLACHH BLACHH

FLAP FLAP

SO EVEN PRINCESSES HAVE LIKES AND DISLIKES...

THAT'S KIND OF FUNNY...

CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP

OH NO!

P...

RATTLE

RATTLE

THUD

CLATTER

POISON?!!

TWITCH

GAK

CLATTER

POISON IN HIME-SAMA'S FOOD?

WHAT?

AND THIS TIME THEY MUST BE INSIDE THE CASTLE!

THAT'S RIGHT, IWAMI-DONO!

SOME-ONE'S TRYING TO KILL HIME AGAIN!

JUST WAIT A MINUTE...

HURRY UP AND SEAL THE CASTLE OFF COMPLETELY!

COULD THESE ALL BE COINCI-DENCES?

PLUS ALL THIS ONLY STARTED HAPPEN-ING AFTER YOU SHOWED UP.

YOU'VE BEEN WITH HIME NOT ONCE, BUT TWICE WHEN HER LIFE WAS IN DANGER.

.....

!

I'D LIKE TO ASK KATANA RAIZŌ A FEW QUESTIONS FIRST.

HIME...

HE'S INNOCENT, GONZA!

SQUEEZE

YOU NEEDN'T DOUBT HIM!

I WAS THE ONE WHO ORDERED HIM TO TASTE FOR POISON.

..THEN WHY IS HE STILL ALIVE?

IF HE TASTED YOUR FOOD FOR POISON...

EVERY-ONE...

...PLEASE LOOK.

HOW CAN YOU SAY HE'S IN-NOCENT?

WE NEED TO ARREST HIM AND QUESTION HIM FURTHER.

WHY DID ONLY THE BIRDS DIE?

TH-THAT'S BECAUSE...

GLUP

GLUP

GLUP

PLUNK

ARE YOU BEHIND THIS, KUNOICHI*?

WH-WHAT IS THIS?

* AMAZINGLY, NO

YOU'VE BEEN DECEIVED.

HIME'S CHOPSTICKS WERE DIPPED IN POISON BEFOREHAND.

RIGHT. NOT THE FOOD.

HER CHOP-STICKS?

SO THAT'S WHY MY LORD IS STILL ALIVE!

THE BIRDS DIED BECAUSE THEY ATE FOOD THAT HAD TOUCHED THE CHOP-STICKS.

THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE!

STAY IN THIS ROOM.

LET'S START BY QUESTIONING THE SERVERS.

RIGHT, GONZA?

NOW RAIZŌ'S CLEAR OF SUSPICION!

GOOD JOB, KUNOICHI!

HOWEVER, HIME...

...I HAVE SOME-THING PRIVATE TO TELL YOU LATER.

NO NEED TO THANK ME. POISON IS MY SPECIALTY!

YOU SAVED ME, HIMEMARU-DONO!

IF YOU WANT TO GIVE ME SOME-THING...

I'D RATHER HAVE SOMETHING BETTER THAN A THANK-YOU... ♡

NO, NO...

IT WASN'T THAT BAD, CONSIDER-ING OUR GOAL...

OUCH...

CRACK

YOU'RE A DIS-GRACE TO RETAIN-ERS!

AHH... THAT'S RIGHT!

THIS IS STILL PRETTY BAD, ISN'T IT?

THERE'S STILL A CRIMINAL INSIDE THE CASTLE!

PROOF SHE'S LETTING HIM INTO HER HEART!

FOR EXAMPLE, HIME HAS BEEN COVERING FOR MASTER A LOT LATELY.

WHICH WOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT THESE EXTREME SITUATIONS.

HUH?

IN OTHER WORDS...

SO MAYBE, JUST MAYBE...

"ONE DROWNING IN PERIL CATCHETH WHATSOEVER COMETH NEXT TO HAND!"

GRRR...

WHA?!

A DEMON CHILD LIKE ME WOULD NEVER HAVE SUCH LUCK!!

WAAAHH!

RIDICULOUS! RIDICULOUS!

KISARABI-SAN?

SLIDE

DON'T SAY THAT!

FLAIL

IMPOSSIBLE!!

IT'S LATE AT NIGHT... AND SHE'S ALONE.

HIME IS ON HER WAY HERE.

WE'RE GOING TO HIDE NOW! ♡

DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE!

IT'S YOUR FIRST "BATTLE"! GO ALL OUT!

MY LORD! GOOD LUCK! ♡

SECRET RENDEZ-VOUS! ♡

YOU PERVERT!!

AH!

SLIDE

WHAT THE?!

DUNNNN

...RAIZŌ?

CAN I TALK TO YOU...

TELL ME, RAIZŌ...

...IS THE BED?!

I'M NOT READY YET, BUT...

Y-Y-Y-YES!

SORRY TO COME SO LATE...

...BUT I HAD TO.

THEY SAID THEY'D BE GONE FOR A WHILE OR SOMETHING...

WHERE ARE THE KUNOICHI?

GOOD.

I HAVE TO MAKE SURE OF SOMETHING.

I NEEDED TO SEE YOU, ALONE.

...ARE YOU...

OF WHAT?!!

...HIDING SOMETHING FROM ME?

THAT?!!

GONZA.

...

NOT AN AN-SWER!

ERR, HAHA, WELL...

SLAM

SLAM

YES.

LOOK FAMILIAR?

THAT ARMOR!!

WON'T YOU ANSWER?

WELL, RAIZŌ?

BOOM

DON'T LET THEM FOOL YOU, MY LORD!!

!!!

GROSS!

WE WANTED TO SEE HOW YOUR FIRST "BATTLE" WENT...

ERR, UMM...

YOU WERE WATCH-ING?!

THEN DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE REAL ONES ARE?

REALLY...

THAT ARMOR IS FAKE!

ANYWAY!

MMPH!

OF COURSE! WE GOT RID OF—

MMMPHH!

YOU FAILED.

THESE ARE FAKE.

MADE TO EXPOSE YOU.

BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE THAT BOTHERED US, TOO.

THE KUNOICHI POSED AS THIEVES...

...SO YOU COULD PRETEND TO SAVE ME...

...AND GET CLOSE TO ME?

OUR SOLDIERS RECOG-NIZED THE TATTOOS THAT AP-PEARED...

...ON YOUR BODY AS THE SAME AS THE FIENDS' WHO ATTACKED THE PRIN-CESS.

UH-OH!!

THE VASSALS' LIVES WERE SAVED USING A MYSTERI-OUS TECH-NIQUE.

MY... HERO?

IS THIS TRUE?

YES...

KEEP ON LYING UNTIL THE END!!

DON'T ADMIT IT, MY LORD!

I GENUINELY WANT TO PROTECT HIME...

AT FIRST IT WAS AN ACT...

BUT NOW...

THIS TIME, IT'S NOT AN ACT.

ARREST HIM!!

YOU!

RA—

KLINK

KLANK

KLANG

KLANG

KLANG

KLANG

KLANG

KLANG

KLANG

NOW, DON'T SAY THAT!

BUT THAT'S OUR MASTER.

THAT'S WHY HE'S WORTH WORKING FOR!

NO USE IN COMPLAIN-ING NOW.

YOU CALL YOUR-SELF A MAN?

MEN NEVER ADMIT LYING TO A GIRL!

...CAN'T HELP IT!!!!

WE JUST...

YOU MON-STERS!

.....!!!

RAIZŌ!

GET HIME OUT OF HERE!

BUT...

MASTER! LEAVE IT TO US AND RUN!

THUD

GOT IT!

KAGARI! GET MASTER!

WHO ARE YOU??

MY LORD !!

?!

SMACK

!!

A WHIP ?!!

NO...! MY POWER!

HE... KNOWS ?

ABOUT SHINTAIGO ?!

RAIZŌ!

RAIZŌ-OOOO-!

BANG

Exposure Rebellion // End

10 Captive Rebellion

PLUNK

WHERE ARE WE?

THE DUNGEON.

WE WERE TAKEN BY THE ENEMY.

I'M SO EMBAR-RASSED...

?!!

WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT?!

OWWWW!

W-WE WERE AR-RESTED?!

?!

KAGARI-DONO? WHAT'S...?

THEY TIED US UP LIKE THIS SO I CAN'T USE SHINTAIGO.

THEY TOOK ALL OUR WEAPONS AWAY, SO THAT'S WHY WE'RE POWERLESS.

MASTER!

WELL, SINCE WE'RE TIED UP BACK-TO-BACK...

...AND I CAN'T SEE YOUR FACE, I CAN'T USE IT.

THEY SEALED SHINTAIGO ?!

IF WE'RE GOING TO DIE, SO BE IT.

THIS IS AS MUCH AS WE CAN MOVE.

WE'RE...

...COMPLETELY TRAPPED?!!

NOT TRAPPED IN A PLACE LIKE THIS!

BUT I'D RATHER DIE YOUNG AND BEAUTI-FUL!

CORPSE?!!

THUMP

I DON'T WANT TO DECAY LIKE THAT CORPSE IN THE CORNER!

JUDG-MENT WILL BE SWIFT.

THEY THINK WE TRIED TO KILL THE PRINCESS.

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE...

SNIFF

SNIFF

HER LIFE IS STILL IN DANGER.

I DON'T THINK HIBARI-HIME WILL ALLOW THAT EVEN IF SHE DOES THINK HE TRIED TO KILL HER...

JUDG...

JUDGMENT?!

WHOEVER IT IS, THEY'RE IN LEAGUE WITH KABUKI SEIGAN.

WHO'S THE REAL CULPRIT?

HOW DO YOU KNOW, KAGARI-DONO?!

WHA?!!

PLUS THE PRINCESS IS STILL IN DANGER...

SO IS THE WHOLE PROV-INCE!

HE KNEW HOW TO SEAL MY POWERS BY NOT LETTING ME SEE MASTER.

THE TATTOOS ON THAT KUNOICHI WHO CAUGHT US LOOKED FAMILIAR.

AND THAT MAN, JŪBĒ, KNEW ABOUT SHIN-TAIGO.

...WHOLE PROVINCE?!

SEIGAN IS AFTER HIME'S...

GASP

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE...

WHY WON'T YOU LET ME SEE RAIZŌ?

WHY, GONZA?

FOR WHAT REASON, PRINCESS?

HE'S THE FIEND THAT TRIED TO KILL YOU!

.....

THERE WILL BE NO QUESTIONING! ONLY PUNISHMENT!

I WANT TO QUES-TION THEM!

WE NEED TO LOCK YOU UP FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY...

ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL HIM, GONZA?

...AND THEN WE'LL MAKE RAIZŌ PAY FOR HIS CRIMES!

EXCUSE ME, BUT...

GONZA!

SIGH

YOU NEVER LISTEN!

AND YOU SHOULDN'T DO ANYTHING SIMPLY BASED ON YOUR EMOTIONS...

SMACK

...I THINK YOU LACK THE CALM JUDGMENT NEEDED TO MAKE DECISIONS, HIME-SAMA.

I'M THE PRIN-CESS!

HOW DARE YOU!

THE PRIN-CESS...

THIS IS ONLY A MEASURE TO KEEP YOU SAFE!

PLEASE BE PATIENT!

GRIN

EVEN IF THEY'RE IN JAIL, THERE COULD BE MORE OF THEM IN THE CASTLE!

TWITCH

WE'LL BE GOING NOW.

CLICK

HIME'S BOOKED UP UNTIL NEXT YEAR!

WAIT, IWAMI-DONO!

FATHER...

RIDICU-LOUS...

THEY'RE TREATING US LIKE PRISONERS!

WELL, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO CANCEL ALL OF IT!

THIS IS BAD!

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE!

YES, WE ALREADY KNOW THAT!

DID SOME-THING HAP-PEN TO KAGARI-DONO?

WHAT'S WRONG?

HMPH

I CAN NO LONGER SMILE...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, MY LORD! ♡

IT'S FINE... IT'S MORE PAINFUL THAT I CAN'T SEE YOU TO DO SHINTAIGO.

WHAT...?!

YOU'RE HURT??

ENDURING PAIN IS A TENET OF BEING A SHINOBI!

...MAKE SURE.

LET'S JUST...

IT'S JUST A SCRATCH, REALLY!

AND MAYBE YOU'LL FEEL MY MIND'S EYE??

I'LL CLOSE MY EYES!

I CAN ONLY DO IT IF YOU LOOK DIRECTLY AT ME!!

HOW ABOUT IF I *WANT* TO LOOK REALLY BAD?

DOESN'T COUNT!

HEY!

WHAT IF I TRY *REALLY* HARD TO LOOK?

USELESS!

SILENCE

NO, IT'S MY FAULT...

SORRY, I'M NO HELP...

HOW ABOUT THIS?

WE'LL FIND SOMETHING TO SEE OUR REFLECTIONS IN!

THAT MIGHT WORK!

LIKE...A *MIRROR* OR SOMETHING!

I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE SHE LOSES CONSCIOUSNESS...

KAGARI'S LEG WON'T STOP BLEEDING...

NOT GOOD...

NOW THAT SHE KNOWS WE DECEIVED HER, SHE WON'T HELP US.

HIME...

RIGHT. WE SHOULD JUST ADMIT WE FAILED AND RUN AWAY.

YOU'RE RIGHT. SHE WOULDN'T WANT TO RISK IT.

MAYBE HIME WILL COME SAVE US!

YEAH RIGHT! WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF SHE'S STILL ALIVE!

DAMN IT!

CRACK

THAT'S TERR-

!

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

...AND RUN AWAY WITHOUT HER?

YOU MEAN LEAVE PRIN-CESS ALONE...

BUT NOW THAT YOU DON'T, SHE MEANS NOTHING TO US!

EVEN IF WE SAVED HER, WE WOULD GAIN NOTHING.

TREMBLE

MASTER?!

WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO GET INVOLVED IN OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS!

ACCEPT YOUR MOTHER'S PRAG-MATISM, MASTER!

THAT WAS WHEN YOU HAD A CHANCE WITH HIME!

THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU'VE BEEN SAYING.

AND YOU'RE SAYING JUST BECAUSE HER FEELINGS CHANGED...

A PRINCESS WE KNOW MIGHT BE KILLED...

...WE SHOULD ABANDON HER??

NO.

I THINK SHE'S WAITING.

B-BUT!

WELL, I CAN'T DO IT!

IN ORDER TO SURVIVE IN THIS WORLD...

IS THAT HOW WE RESTORE MY FAMILY, KISARABI-SAN?

IT FEELS LIKE EVERYONE'S ABAN-DONED YOU.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE ALL ALONE, KISARABI-SAN?

...SHE'LL BE ALL ALONE.

IF WE RUN AWAY NOW...

BUT MY LORD, SHE'S ALREADY...

I KNOW HOW TERRIBLE IT FEELS.

HIME IS...

...WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO SAVE HER, TOO.

...TO COME AND SAVE ME...

JUST LIKE I WAITED FOR SOMEONE...

I KNOW THAT...

...EVEN IF WE DID GET OUT OF HERE...

...WE HAVE NO PROOF THAT WE'RE INNOCENT.

AND THE SAME THING WOULD HAPPEN ALL OVER AGAIN.

UNLESS THE REAL CULPRIT IS CAUGHT...

WAAAAAHHH!!

WHY ARE YOU CRYING, KAGARI?

LISTENING TO MASTER'S STORY MADE ME SAD!

SHE'S BECOMING UNSTABLE BECAUSE OF THE LOSS OF BLOOD!

DON'T CRY, KAGARI. IT'LL MAKE YOUR WOUND WORSE.

WHO'S CRYING?

IS THAT YOU?

NO WAY...

WE'RE HEARING THINGS...

GASP

SCUFF

SCUFF

THE CORPSE TALKED!!!

SMILE...

WHEEZE

YOU MUSTN'T CRY.

YOU HAVE SOME NERVE WORRYING ABOUT MY HEALTH SINCE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO PUT ME HERE.

GONZA?

IF YOU DON'T REST SOON, YOU'LL GET SICK.

HOW-EVER...

KLINK

HARSH.

THAT'S OUR PRIN-CESS.

...IT ENDS TONIGHT.

?!!

WHAT ARE YOU...?

IF YOU'D GONE TO SLEEP, YOU WOULD HAVE DIED IN IGNORANT BLISS!

WHEN MASTER FINDS OUT...

GET AHOLD OF YOUR-SELF, IWAMI-DONO!

...

HE'S IN A PLACE WHERE THAT'LL NEVER HAPPEN.

PREPARE YOUR-SELF...

PRINCESS!!

...AND SLEEP FOR ALL ETER-NITY!

YOU'LL BE CUT DOWN LIKE A DOG...

TMP

TMP

TMP

...

PHEWWW

BE GRATE-FUL, HIME!

NOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THE PROVINCE ANYMORE.

SHUT UP!

THUD

HUH?!

...JŪBÉ-DONO?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING...

WHAAA?!

JŪBÉ...

WAS IT YOUR PLAN ALL ALONG TO BETRAY ME??

DO YOU NEED ME TO DRAW YOU A PIC-TURE??

THWACK

THWACK

THWACK

WHY THE HELL ARE YOU CHICKEN-ING OUT NOW?

IS THAT HOW STUPID YOU ARE?

AH...

UGHH

?!

.....

TAKING OVER ONE PROVINCE IS EASY!

IF I WANT IT DONE RIGHT, I GOTTA DO IT MYSELF!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

TAKING OVER LEADER-SHIP FROM A USELESS LEADER ISN'T UN-USUAL.

BETRAY?

PAT

PAT

WE CAN'T LET OUR MASTER, SEIGAN-SAMA, WAIT!

HURRY UP AND DO IT!

DUNGEON...

WE HAVE ALL THE CRIMINALS LOCKED UP IN THE DUNGEON!

I PREFER "USURP."

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...

SO HE FRAMED RAIZŌ...

WHAT'S WRONG?

EVEN IF IT'S YOUR DUTY...

...AT YOUR AGE YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY RUN THE PROVINCE ALONE...

EXCUSE ME, BUT WHO ARE YOU?

HE WASN'T DEAD?

HE'S JUST BAB-BLING...

HUH?

ALL I'VE DONE IS CAUSE YOU TROUBLE...

!

...IMPRISONED ME HERE SO HE COULD TAKE OVER THE COUNTRY...

AND THAT IWAMI GONZA...

WHICH MEANS...

HIBARI-HIME'S FATHER??

FORGIVE YOUR WEAK FATHER...

FORGIVE ME, HIBARI.

DRIP

DRIP

DRIP

RULER OF THE PROV-INCE?!

SCRAPE

SCRAPE

SCRAPE

THE...

!

KISARABI-SAN...

MY LORD! IF THIS IS TRUE, WE HAVE OUR CHANCE!

IF WE CAN FREE OURSELVES AND BRING HIM TO THE PRINCESS, WE CAN PROVE OUR INNOCENCE!

?!

DON'T MOVE!

WHAT IS IT?

WELL, IT'S NOT...

...LIKE IT DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH US...

KAGARI-DONO!

DON'T CLOSE YOUR EYES, KISARABI-SAN!

GET AS CLOSE AS YOU CAN!

LOOK INTO KISARABI-SAN'S EYES!

MY LORD...

...IS LOOKING AT ME!

QUIVER

HI-ME!

.....!

CRACK

STOP RIGHT THERE!

I CAN NEVER IGNORE A PRINCESS IN NEED!

I'M KATANA RAIZŌ, SON OF THE LORD OF TSUKIGASE!

IT'S NOT AN ACT THIS TIME...

WE'VE COME TO SAVE YOU!

WE'VE COME TO SAVE YOU!

11

Old Wound Rebellion

MY HERO!!

WHAT THE? HOW DID YOU GET OUT?

THEY BROKE THROUGH MY BONDS!

I THOUGHT I SEALED SHINTAIGO...

STOP RIGHT THERE!

RUMBLE

NO MATTER! I STILL HAVE THE TRUMP CARD!

ONE MORE STEP AND SHE'S DEAD!

CLICK

THAT IDIOT...

BANG

BANG

IS ANYONE THERE?

SOME-ONE!

...OUT OF TIME!

I'M RUN-NING...

NOOO!!

IF YOU CALL SOME-ONE NOW...

...THEY'LL SEE ME THREAT-ENING THE PRIN-CESS!

THWACK

THWACK

THWACK

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, STUPID?

HUH?!

CRACK

HIME?!

FALL

YOU LITTLE BRAT.

I-EWEARI
DOZOOO=!

ZAAAAHXAA-!

WHAPSHHH

SHOOOM

WON'T FALL FOR THAT AGAIN!

CRACK

?!

WHAT??

YOU CAN'T USE THEM TIED TOGETHER LIKE THAT!

WHAT DID YOU DO TO MY WHIPS??

THEY BROKE OUT OF PRISON!

THERE ARE THE FOOLS WHO TRIED TO KILL HIME!

TWITCH

TWITCH

KILL THEM!!

WHAT'S GOING ON??

IWAMI-SAMA!

GLAD YOU CAME!

FOR HIME!

BANG

BANG

UUGH!

YOU...

OOF...

...I'LL HAVE A HARD TIME GETTING A CLEAR SHOT...

UH-OH... IF THEY GROUP TOGETHER LIKE THAT...

RASENGAN!

THERE'S ONLY ONE ENTRANCE!

WH- WHAT??

KISARABI- SAN!

THAT BRAT...

...IS SURPRIS- INGLY CALM.

GOT IT!

!

THAT'S THE ONLY WAY....

...MORE TROOPS CAN COME IN!

...KAGARI- DONO. ♡

GO WILD...

MY LORD! ♡

I SHOT HER IN THE LEG...?

WAIT A SEC- OND...

WHAT ABOUT ME? HUH? HUH?

SHINTAIGO!!!

GLINT

WELL, THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME...

うわあ

WAAAHH

.....

CRACK

THUD

IT'S HEALED?!

CHING

!

TCH.

CHING

NOT YET!

HUH?!

STOP.

NAJA...

SHOCK

I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY, IDIOT!

!

PULL

DON'T SAY MY NAME LIKE THAT!!

MY WHIPS ARE MADE OUT OF HUMAN TENDONS!

PITIFUL!

BINDS LIKE THIS...

STRETCH

FLEX

FLEX

FLEX

CREAK

WHAT THE?!

KER-SNAP

...WITH JUST A LITTLE PRES-SURE...

SHE'S BEEN WORKING ON THAT TECHNIQUE FOR SIX MONTHS NOW...

MOOOVE!

WAAAAH

WHAT AN IDIOT.

RAIZŌ-HAN...I'LL TAKE WHAT YOU'RE AFTER...

...THE PRINCESS AND THIS PROVINCE!

!

!

THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT.

YOU'RE MUCH STRONGER THAN THE RUMORS I HEARD ABOUT YOU.

YEAH, RIGHT!

HA HA HA!

THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M AFTER!

NOOO!

STRANGELY CORRECT

GRRR

I'LL LET YOU LIVE THIS TIME.

TOSS

!

WELL...

I'M KABUKI SEIGAN'S STAFF OFFICER.

AKECHI JŪBĒ MITSUHIDE.

...TAKE CARE UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN!

SWIIRLLL

HARBINGER OF CHAOS!

ROOOAR

HE'S GONE.

HYOOOOOO

I ALMOST HAD HIM!!

HE USES FLOWER ESCAPE INSTEAD OF FIRE ESCAPE?!

GASP

DON'T WORRY. WE CHASED OFF THE CRIMINALS...

HIME! YOU'RE AWAKE!

RAI...ZŌ?

EAT MY KATANA!

YOU DAMN PEAS-ANT!

KLINK

AHH!

PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGY!

BOW

I-I'M SO SORRY!

STOP IT!

IT WAS HE WHO SAVED HIME'S LIFE, THE HERO WHO EXPOSED GONZA'S CRIMES!

MY LORD, YOU LOOK...

FATHER!

I KNOW WHAT YOU DID...

I WAS AWARE THE WHOLE TIME...

I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR A YOUNG MAN LIKE YOU...

TOTTER

KATANA RAIZŌ WAS MAGNIFICENT!

WHAT DID HE SAY?!!

PLEASE MARRY HIBARI!

THE NEXT DAY

AT THE KABURAGI CASTLE...

...IN ORDER TO AVOID A FIERCE OPPOSITION FROM THE CITIZENS AND DIGNITARIES...

...THEY WERE PREPARING FOR A TOP-SECRET EN-GAGEMENT PARTY.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!!!

ANY-WAY...

FINALLY, THE KATANA FAMILY'S REVIVAL HAS BEGUN!

THIS IS IMPOS-SIBLE...

I MUST BE DREAM-ING...

HEH HEH...

HA HA...

HEH HEH

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

WHAT'S WRONG, MY LORD?!

STOP CRYING, KAGAR!!!

AT THE LORD'S REQUEST, YOU WILL MARRY THE KABURAGI PRINCESS!!

IT'S NOT A DREAM!

GET AHOLD OF YOUR-SELF, MAS-TER!

HUH?

I'M A "DEMON CHILD"!

BUT...

...WHAT ABOUT MY HORN?

IGNORE IT AND HIDE IT FOREVER!

FORGET ABOUT IT?

JUST FORGET ABOUT...

GRRR

CRACKLE

EVEN IF HEAVEN AND HELL...

...ALLOW THE MARRIAGE...

DEMON CHILD!

HIDE...?!

THEY'LL FIND OUT EVENTU-ALLY!

THEN IT'LL HURT EVEN MORE!!

FLAIL

FLAIL

MY LORD!!

...THE DAMN HORN!!

...NOTHING GOOD WILL EVER HAPPEN TO ME!!

AS LONG AS I HAVE THIS HORN...

PLEASE THINK OF US...

THIS IS THE DAY WE'VE BEEN STRUG-GLING TOWARD!

SNIFFLE

SNIFFLE

I MADE HER CRY!

IT'S OUR DEAREST WISH THAT YOU MARRY, MY LORD.

KISARABI-SAN?

SQUEEZE

I...I...

!

...FOR EVERY-ONE'S SAKE?!!

I HAVE TO DO THIS...

SIGH

WHAT I THINK IS BEST?

KAGARI-DONO...

SHE WANTS TO SEE HOW HER GROOM FEELS.

HEY. THE PRINCESS IS COMING.

RATTLE

GET BACK HERE!

RUN-NING AWAY.

I HAVE TO GO TO THE BATH-ROOM.

HEY!

I THINK...

...YOU THINK IS BEST, MY LORD.

...YOU SHOULD DO WHATEVER...

NICE ONE, MOTHER!

OOOH!

CRACK

HI...ME?

A HORN...

I NEED TO GET AWAY BEFORE SHE THROWS ROCKS AT ME!!

IT'S ALL OVER!!

SHE SAW IIIIITT!!

HUH?

SHE CHASED ME!

WAIT!

RAIZŌ?!

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?

WHAT ABOUT OUR ENGAGE-MENT PARTY?

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

SORRY...

THUD

...TO GET MARRIED?

TMP TMP TMP

DON'T YOU WANT...

TMP

I JUST DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE THIS THING ON MY FORE-HEAD...

OF COURSE NOT...

...HATE...

...ME?

DO YOU...

I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I WASN'T SURPRISED.

OH, THAT?

CAN'T BELIEVE...

. . .

UNUSUAL. . . .

STAB

STAB

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT UNUSUAL!

I DON'T WANNA HEAR IT!!

I... I...

BUT...

THUMP

WELL, TAKE CARE NOW!

RAIZO!

SHOOOM

WELL, WE'LL BE GOING NOW!

PLEASE FORGET ABOUT THE HORN!

ME, HATE YOU??

DON'T BE RIDICU-LOUS! I THOUGHT YOU HATED ME!

I'D RATHER LEAVE YOU...

...WHILE I HAVE GOOD MEMO-RIES OF YOU...

...BEFORE YOU START TO HATE ME!

...WHAT?

WHY DID YOU RUN AWAY WITHOUT LISTENING TO MY FEELINGS??

WHY, MY HERO?

YOU IDIOT!

HUH?

IT'S BETTER THIS WAY, KISARABI-SAN.

MY LORD...

...YOU THOUGHT OF OUR FEEL-INGS...

COLLAPSED

SHE'S SUCH A NICE GIRL, PERHAPS THE HORN WOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED HER...

BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO RUN AWAY LIKE THAT!

DRIP

...IS JUST TOO DAMAGED!!

HIS HEART...

.....

NO GIRL WOULD FALL IN LOVE...

...WITH A DEMON CHILD LIKE ME.

WHAT THE HELL WAS ALL THAT TROUBLE FOR, THEN?!

THAT'S NOT TRUE, MY LORD!

WAAAAH

CRY-ING FOR REAL THIS TIME.

A GIRL WHO WILL LOVE YOU WITH ALL HER HEART!

I'M SURE SHE'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE!

SUCH AS YOUR-SELF, MAYBE?

WAAAH

NOO!

THIS IS THE IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT?!

ENGAGEMENT?!

SO THE ENGAGE-MENT PARTY IS TODAY?

...THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO MARRY.

I UNDER-STAND HOW YOU FEEL, BUT...

TEARS ARE TABOO AT A HAPPY OC-CASION, MY SAMURAI.

NO...

IT'S POST-PONED FOR A BIT...

AS YOU CAN SEE, MY FIANCÉ IS GONE.

SNIFF

WHAT?

WHY?

I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.

I DIDN'T WANT IT TO HAPPEN SO SOON...

BUT IT'S SO SUDDEN...

HICCUP

YOU'LL FIND HIM EASILY...

...BE-CAUSE HE HAS A HORN ON HIS FORE-HEAD. ♡

GO FIND MY FIANCÉ AND BRING HIM BACK.

THERE WERE EVEN RIOTS, BUT MOST JUST SHED TEARS FOR THEIR BELOVED PRINCESS.

WAVES OF SHOCK SWEPT OVER THE KINGDOM.

...THAN AFTER ME, AND I TRIED TO OVER-THROW THE LORD!

IT'S MY LUCKY DAY!

THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE AFTER THE GROOM...

CHATTER CHATTER

I WON'T FORGIVE HIM!

IF YOU KILL HIM, I'LL DIE, TOO!

AND THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON RESPON-SIBLE FOR ALL THIS.

To be continued...

TRANSLATION NOTES

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more art than science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction in our translation of the work, or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Sengoku era

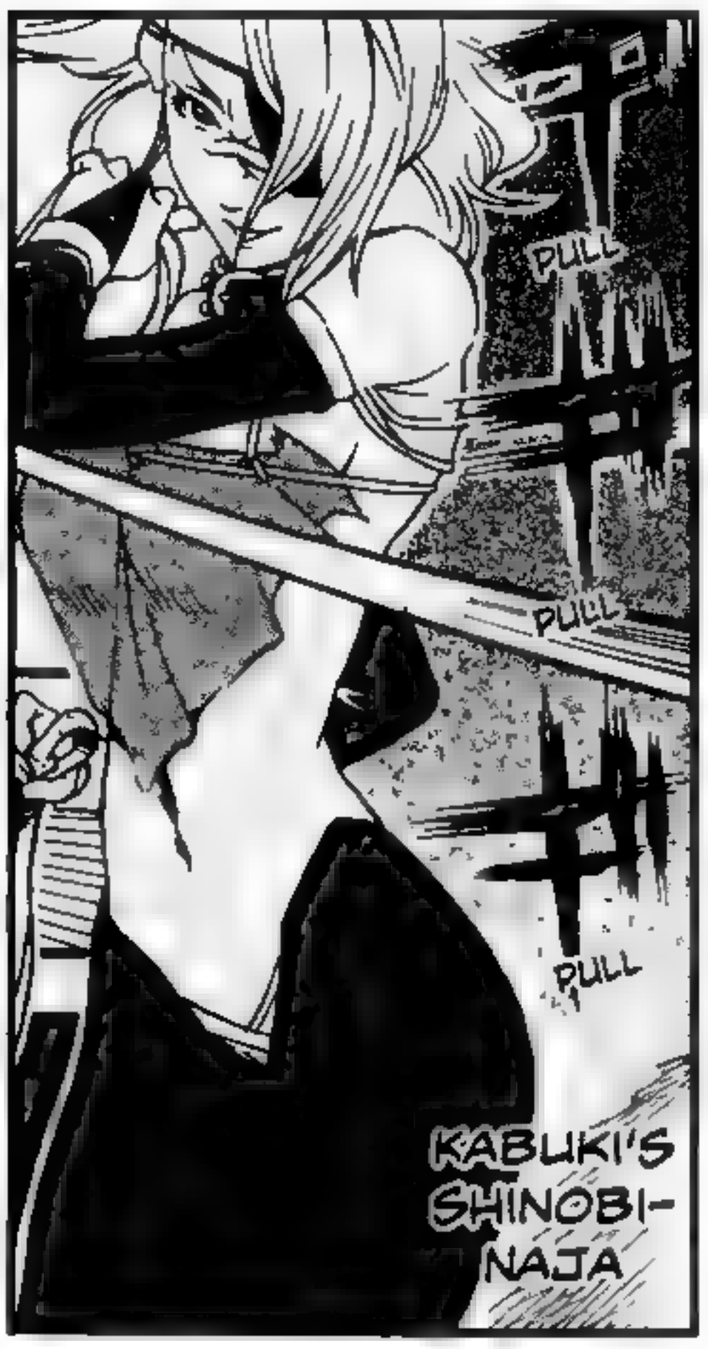
Sengoku jidai (Warring States Era) lasted from the mid–fifteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century. As its name suggests, it was a time of civil war in Japan, with regional lords (*daimyo*) taking control because of a weak central government. The most famous *daimyo* were Oda Nobunaga, known for his military prowess, and Tokugawa Ieyasu, who went on to become the first shogun of Japan's final shogunate.

-nee

-nee is a shortened version of "Oneesan" or "Oneechan"—"sister." It can also be used as a term of endearment toward older girls who aren't necessarily related to the speaker, as when Mizuchi calls Kagari "Kagari-nee."

Hime

Hime means "princess."



shinobi, page 9

Another word for ninja. *Shinobi* was the more commonly used term for ninja until its usage declined in popularity post–World War II.

kunoichi, page 11

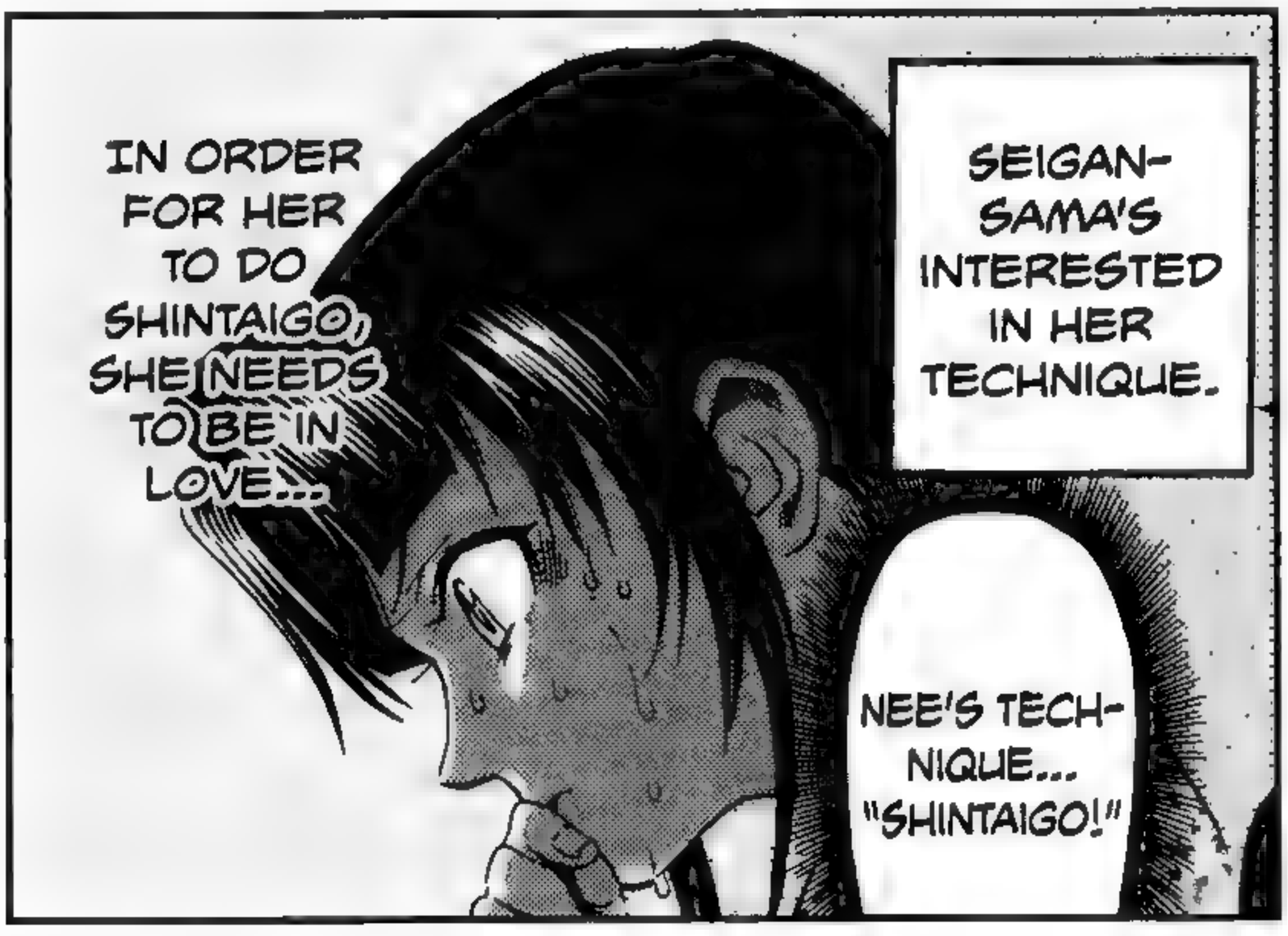
A *kunoichi* is a female ninja. The kanji for the word resembles the kanji of the word for "woman."

Daddy Long-Legs, page 13

A novel by Jean Webster published in 1912 about a girl who writes letters to her benefactor, a rich man whom she has never met.

Purple Rose Man, page 13

This refers to a character from *Garasu no Kamen* (*Glass Mask*)—a manga by Suzue Miuchi. The protagonist, aspiring actress Maya, is encouraged by the support of an anonymous fan whom she calls "The Purple Rose Man" because of the trademark purple roses he sends her. He pays for her tuition and takes care of her much like Daddy Long-Legs from Webster's novel does.


IN ORDER FOR HER TO DO SHINTAIGO, SHE NEEDS TO BE IN LOVE...
SEIGAN-SAMA'S INTERESTED IN HER TECHNIQUE.
NEE'S TECH-NIQUE... "SHINTAIGO!"

Shintaigo, page 21

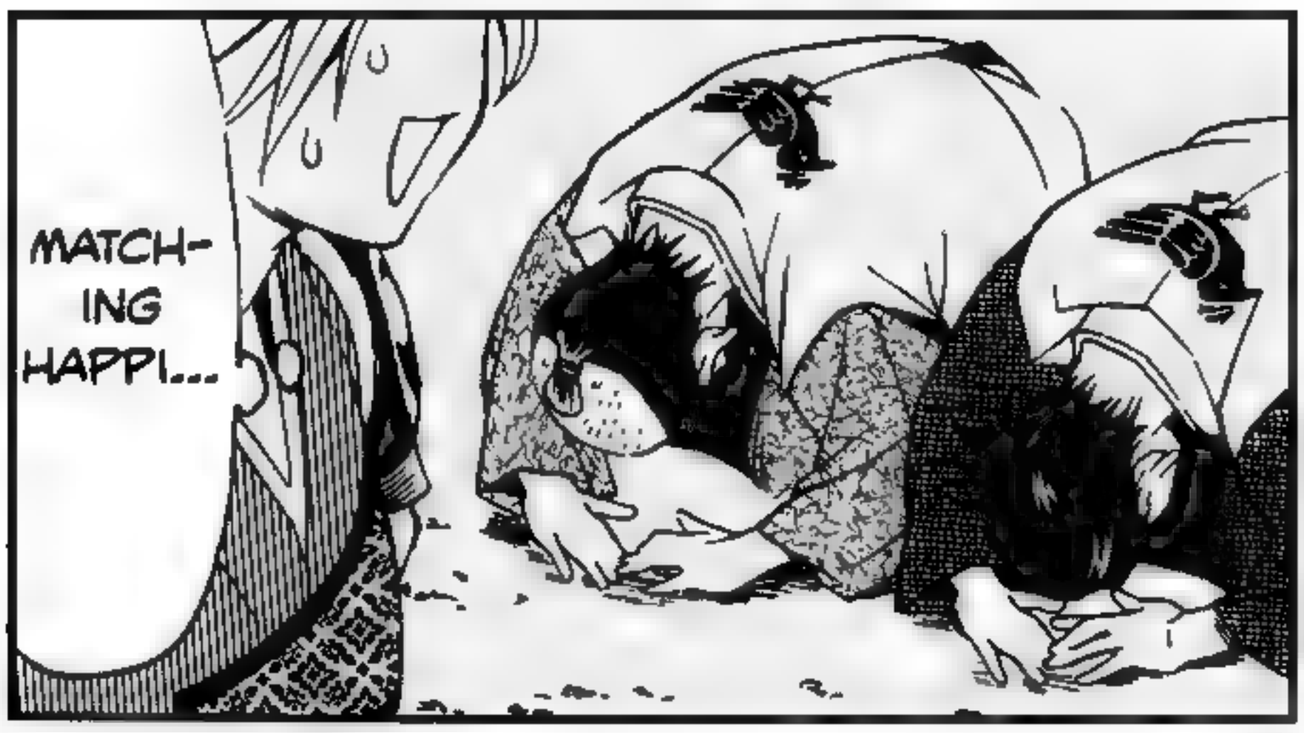
Kagari's special *ninpo* attack. It's written with the characters for "god," "body," and "conjuction."

ihai, page 52

An *ihai* is a mortuary tablet that's often placed on a Buddhist altar to honor a deceased loved one. It's usually a wood or stone tablet that's engraved with the deceased person's posthumous name, which is given to them by the Buddhist priest who performed their funerary rites.

Marishi-ten, page 56

Goddess of light and heaven, patron deity of warriors. Samurai would invoke Marishi-ten before battle for protection and some believed she would make them invisible to their enemies.

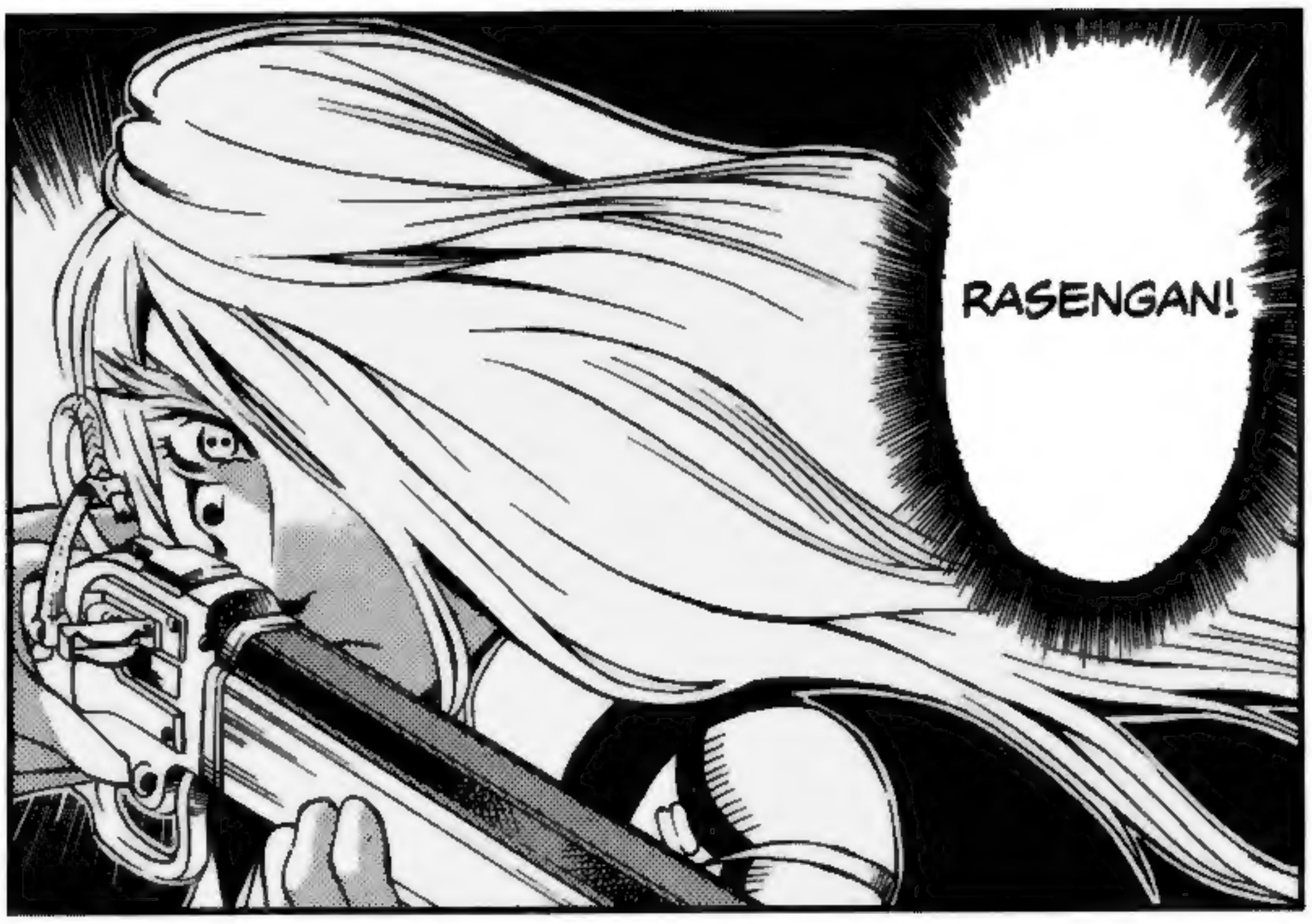


Happi, page 58

A *Happi* is a traditional Japanese coat, usually worn by servants in this time period.

kemari, page 72

A type of game played by courtiers in ancient Japan, *kemari* resembles hacky sack except it uses a ball instead of a beanbag.



***rasengan*, page 166**

Kisarabi's special *ninpo* attack. It's written with the characters for "wizard" and "eye."

***-han*, page 172**

-han is an honorific that means roughly the same thing as –san. It's largely outdated, but is still used today in some parts of Japan, particularly in Kyoto.

MARRYING UP!

Raizō is heir to the once-powerful Katana family, and his loyal and lethal new companions—a band of beautiful female ninjas—are determined to restore the family to power. That means the hopelessly dorky Raizō must marry a wealthy bride. But when Raizō's prospective fiancée is the victim of attempted murder, the prime suspects are none other than the lovely ninjas!

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